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FBI chief suspected spy posed as Oswald

NEW YORK (AP) — The late FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover suspected that an impostor — possibly a Soviet agent — was posing as Lee Harvey Oswald in 1960, three years before Oswald assassinated President John F. Kennedy, the New York Post reported yesterday.

The copyrighted story said Hoover's suspicions were found in a memo from Hoover to the State Department dated June 6, 1960, when Oswald was known to be in the Soviet Union.

"Since there's a possibility that an impostor is using Oswald's birth certificate, any current information the Dept. of State may have concerning this subject will be appreciated," the memo reportedly said. The paper did not say if any information was forwarded to Hoover.

Nine months later, according to the Post, Edward Hickey, chief of the department's passport division, sent a memo to the consular section warning: "It has been stated that there is an impostor using Oswald identification data and that there is no doubt the Soviets would love to get hold of his valid passport."

The Post said the documents were obtained from the National Archives under the Freedom of Information Act.

The revelation casts further doubt on the identity of the assassin, who is believed to have killed Kennedy during a motorcade through Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

The Warren Commission, empaneled to investigate the murder, determined that Oswald, acting alone, shot and killed the president from a window in a school book depository building overlooking Dealey Plaza.

Periodically since then, the commission's findings have been questioned by assassination buffs who contend that Oswald, who was murdered shortly afterward by Jack Ruby, was acting as part of a conspiracy.

Most recently, a skeptical British author, Michael Eddowes, published a book in which he says the assassin was a Soviet spy, Alek James Hiddell, who assumed Oswald's identity and traveled to the United States from the Soviet Union.

On Friday, Dallas County Medical Examiner Charles Petty said he had asked his Tarrant County counterpart to exhume the body in Oswald's grave to determine its identity.